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ABSTRACT

This paper provides information sources and ideas for challenge and adventure activities. Main information sources are listed: libraries, ERIC, and several publishers and programs. Some useful publications are described that provide activities and ideas related to outdoor education, environmental issues, games, special populations, educational theory and practice, corporate experiential learning, facilitation, and adventure. Specific annual workshops in outdoor recreation and leadership are listed, as well as adventure organizations that offer training opportunities. Four sets of group activities for challenge and adventure programs are described: the spider's web, 2B or Knot 2B (group problem solving with ropes and knots), raccoon circles (group challenges using 1-inch tubular climbing webbing), and the lycra tube (group activities using five yards of lycra sewn into a tube). (SV)

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Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, and Something Blue.
New Ideas for Challenge and Adventure Programs

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B. Baker

ABSTRACT

In the 25 years that I have been involved with camping programs and challenge and adventure activities, I have collected a substantial amount of information and programming ideas. Probably my favorite collection is the three or four bookcases filled with challenge and adventure activities. I have many of the same references that most folks have, such as the well-worn copies of *Silver Bullets* and *Cowtails and Cobras* by Karl Rohnke. But I also have a collection of some more recent pub-lications that are equally useful, many of which are mentioned in the following paragraphs. I have chosen the title for this paper from the variety of activities I've invented and collected over the years. Few things are more useful to a challenge and adventure programmer or facilitator than a well-constructed challenge activity. In addition to providing some useful references, I hope this paper provides some useful ideas for new activities.

1. Finding the information and resources you need.

Libraries are incredible places, and now that even the most remote libraries are linked together, it is easy to locate some of the more obscure texts from nearly anywhere in the country. Try searching on the following topics: adventure education, outdoor education, trust, team building, facilitation. If you can't seem to find the information you need at a library, try the Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC) at the following address:

ERIC / CRESS, P.O. Box 1348, Charleston, WV 25325 USA
Phone 1-800-624-9120 Internet address: lanhamb@ael.org.

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Other sources for adventure programs related publications include:

Kendall/Hunt Publishers, 4050 Westmark Drive,
Dubuque, IA 52004 USA
Phone 1-800-228-0810

Adventure Education, 12 Saint Andrews Churchyard,
Penrith, Cumbria, England CA11 7YE

ACA Bookstore, 5000 State Road 67 North, Martinsville, IN 46151 USA

Project Adventure, P.O. Box 100, Hamilton, MA 01936 USA

Books, Journals, and Other Publications

The following list contains some of the most useful, and occasionally unusual, resources I have found to date.

Games

After you've read *New Games* (1976) and *More New Games* (1981), edited by Andrew Flugelman, and *Playfair* (1980) by Matt Weinstein and Joel Goodman, try Jack Pearse's book *More Campfire Programs* (1988) and Mike Yaconelli & Wayne Rice's book, *Play It* (1986).

Environmental Issues

I've enjoyed *The Man Who Planted Trees* (1985) by Jean Giono, *The Great Garbage Concert – Environmental Songs and Activity Book* (1991) from Glenn McClure (Phone 716-243-0324), and the NOLS publication *Soft Paths* (1988) by Bruce Hampton and David Cole.

Special Populations

For older populations, try Jerry Elliott's book *Recreation Programming and Activities for Older Adults* (1991). For physically, mentally, and emotionally challenged audiences, try *Adapted Adventure Activities*

(1995) by Wendy Ellmo and Jill Graser, and *Together Successfully* (1991) by John Rynders and Stuart Schleren.

Educational Pursuits

Two thorough books are *Outdoor Adventure Pursuits* (1989) by Alan Ewert and *The Theory and Practice of Challenge Education* (1992) by Tom Smith, Christopher Roland, Mark Havens, and Judity Hoyt.

Corporate Programs

I have just finished reading *Do It . . . and Understand – The Bottom Line on Corporate Experiential Learning* by Christopher Roland, Richard Wagner, and Robert Weigand. Quite frankly, Roland and Wagner should be knighted for their contributions to this field. This publication is excellent and should be on the required reading list for everyone.

Facilitation

Processing the Adventure Experience (1992) by Reldan Nadler and John Luckner is one of the most commonly used texts on the subject, and now there is a brand-new edition of this classic text. Another excellent text is *The Skilled Facilitator: Practical Wisdom for Developing Effective Groups* by Roger M. Schwarz (1994).

Significant Publications

Be sure to include the following publications when you are forming your own philosophy on adventure and challenge programs: *Winning is Everything and Other American Myths* (1976) by Thomas Tutko and William Bruns, and *No Contest* (1986) by Alfie Kohn.

Challenge and Adventure Activities

By now, most folks have seen the classics, such as Karl Rohnke's *Silver Bullets* and *The Bottomless Bag*, but try *The Pictorial Guide to Group Work Activities* (1991) by Geoff Sanders (a British publication available from Adventure Education), *Ready, Set, Go!* (1996) by Brenda Malone, et al. of the Adventure Education Center in Worthington, Ohio, and *Teamwork & Teamplay* (1997) by Jim Cain and Barry Jolliff. Also check out *Adventure in the Classroom* (1997) by Mary Henton and *Adventures in Peacemaking* (1995) by William Kreidler and Lisa Furlong.

Journal Articles

Two significant journal articles include "How Effective is Outdoor Training?" by Richard Wagner and Christopher Roland in the July 1992 issue of *Training and Development* and "Getting the Most Out of Outdoor Training" by Paul Buller, John Cragun, and Glenn McEvoy in the March 1991 issue of *Training and Development Journal*.

Workshops, Training Opportunities, and Other Resources

Nothing beats hands-on training, and here are some places to find it.

Workshops

One of the most enjoyable methods for learning a variety of useful skills is using the many recreation labs sponsored throughout the country. Initially started as an outreach program from universities and colleges to the rural community, these workshops have provided more than 50 years of education in leading recreation. Programs include a variety of

outdoor recreation activities, games, program planning, song leading, adapted programs for special populations, and often some excellent staffs, featured speakers, and even university credit or C.E.U.s.

Ohio – Buckeye Leadership Workshop Annual Mid-March Workshop Dates for the 1998 workshop are March 27 – April 1, 1998 in Ashley, OH. Contact: Dorotha Mengert, 204 Ambrose, P.O. Box 217, Arcadia, OH 44804 USA

Indiana – Hoosier Recreation Workshop Annual Mid-April Workshop Contact: Patty Payton, 3940 S. Eller Lane, Bloomington, IN 47403 USA

Western Pennsylvania – Laurel Highlands Leisure Life Lab Annual April Workshop; Contact: Jack Harting, 1203 Malinda Road, Oreland, PA 19075 USA

Michigan – Great Lakes Recreation Leader's Lab Annual Mid-May Workshop
Contact: Daleine Eilers, Route 1, Box 32, Mears, MI 49436 USA

South Dakota – Black Hills Recreation Lab Annual Mid-September Workshop
Contact: Karen Ward, Box 134, Springdale, MT 59082 USA

Adventure Training Programs

The following organizations offer a variety of training events throughout the year, some of which include certification in challenge and adventure-related programming.

The Adventure Education Center, 123 W. New England Avenue, Worthington, OH 43085 USA

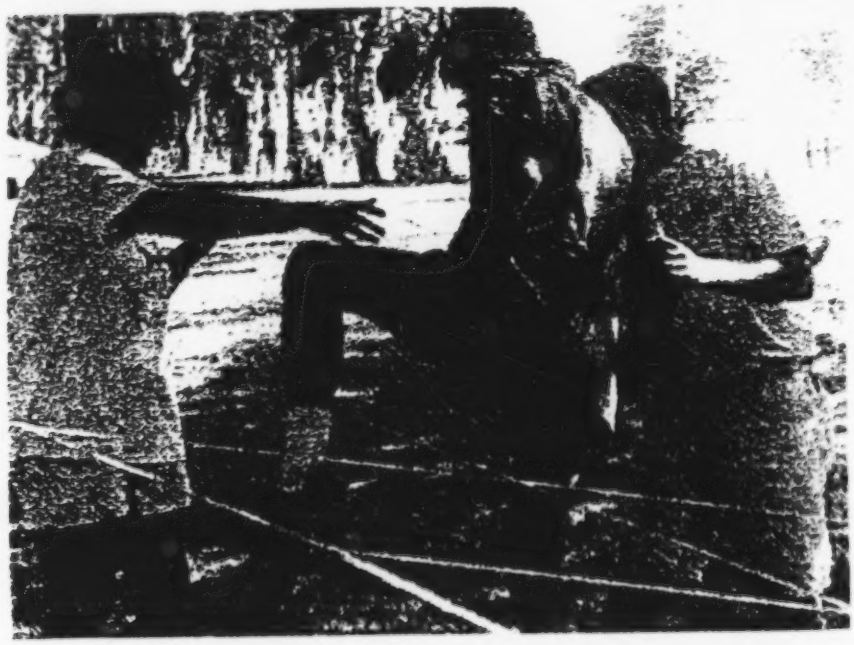
Project Adventure, P.O. Box 100, Hamilton, MA 01936 USA

Bradford Woods, 5040 State Road 67 North, Martinsville, IN 46151 USA

2. **Activities for Challenge and Adventure Programs**

Something Old: The Spider's Web

The Spider's Web ranks as one of the classic challenge and adventure activities of all time. For something new, why not try a version of the Spider's Web that is more horizontal than vertical, or even the inclined web shown below. In this version, participants try to reach the top of the web by moving from hole to hole without touching the web. A maximum of two (or three depending on your group size) persons per opening provide room to move and space for spotting others. You can allow a participant to "tunnel" underneath one web strand per journey across the web. Most folks save this for the last and highest web strand.



An Inclined Version of the Web

Something New – 2B or KNOT 2B

You'll also find this activity in the AEE publication, *The Book of Metaphors, Volume II.* You will need five pieces of rope that are each 10 feet long. With a single rope, tie the ends together to form a rope hoop. Do

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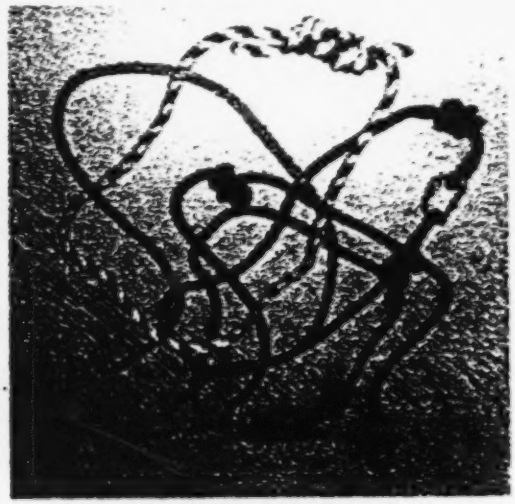
this with three more ropes so that you will have a total of four ropes, tied into hoops that are not connected to each other. Now use the final piece of rope to form a rope hoop that passes through the other four ropes. Place the connected ropes on the ground and position them so that it is not immediately obvious which rope is holding the others together. This activity is used to acquaint the group with problem-solving activities and to see what is required to reach a group consensus. The goal is now to collectively decide (without moving the ropes) which rope is holding the others together. For variation try using different color ropes, or substantially longer ropes (such as a 165-foot-long climbing rope).

Laying Out the Rope
for 2 B or KNOT 2B



Trying to Solve the Puzzle
of 2B or KNOT 2B

Something Borrowed: Raccoon Circles by Tom Smith

Recently, at the Bradford Woods Institute, Tom Smith brought several 12-foot-long sections of one-inch tubular climbing webbing to a session entitled "Raccoon Circles." We played for more than two hours with only this simple piece of webbing. One of my favorite activities was a modified Electric Fence using the webbing after it had been tied into a

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loop using a water knot. For a group of twelve, begin with two folks holding the webbing. This leaves five team members on each side. The first persons to trade sides over the webbing do so with the webbing one foot off the ground. The next two persons trade sides with the webbing two feet off the ground, and so on. This technique provides plenty of assistance on each side at all times, and allows even the most challenged persons to participate.

Something Blue: The Lycra Tube

My coauthor on the book *Teamwork & Teamplay* is both an excellent teacher and one of the most innovative leaders I have ever met. Barry Jolliff once confided in me that the secret to being a good dance instructor was to simply "always wear clean white tennis shoes," because folks always watch your feet when you teach dancing. In the mid-1980s Barry showed up at a gathering with five yards of lycra that he had sewn into a tube. For the next few hours, folks learned about all sorts of engineering from that piece of lycra. Of course, there were centrifugal force, momentum, Newton's Laws, gravity (which always wins sooner or later, by the way), static electricity, action-reaction, and more. The best thing about lycra is that you can cut an edge without unraveling it. Nearly any lapped seam can be used to join the ends together, and if you do not happen to have any idea what to do with one, don't worry, folks tend to make up their own activities very quickly.

One of the activities I use the Lycra Tube for is called "Around the World" where one person inside the tube pushes outward away from the group and rolls around the inside of the tube until returning to their starting location, then the next person rolls, and so on.

"Around the World" in a Lycra Tube

Summary

There are hundreds of sources for information about challenge and adventure activities. Some come in the form of books and journals, some are published in graduate papers and doctoral theses, some are in the microfiche of ERIC, and some of the really good stuff is in the hearts and minds of practitioners, like you! I hope you find these resources and activities new and exciting.